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persistent superstition the history of which has given rise to a considerable literature: the bibliography given covers 28 pages!

**Crops and Temperature.** The relations between crops and weather conditions are highly complex. Many factors enter into the problem. These are not meteorological controls alone. They are also soil conditions, the character of the seed, the time of planting, the methods of cultivation, and the like. Hence the determination of definite relationship is difficult, often impossible. Special attention has lately been paid to rainfall controls. A recent study in agricultural meteorology by D. A. Seeley deals with the temperature element (abstracted in *Monthly Weather Rev.*, July, 1917, pp. 354-359). What the author has in view is the determination of the heat requirements of each crop and a method of evaluating air temperature records in terms of their efficiency to meet these requirements. The method most generally employed is the "summation process," so-called. This consists in adding together the mean daily air temperatures during the life phase of a crop in order to find the thermal requirement. The results differ widely from year to year. Van't Hoff's law, introducing the exponential method, does not take account of the optimum temperature for growth and fails to produce consistent results. Livingston's "physiological index" method of evaluating temperatures, while "based on a reasonable footing," is not satisfactory. The author believes that the temperature of the plant itself deserves more consideration. This is much higher than the air temperature, in sunshine. Observations at East Lansing, Mich., in 1915-16, show that the excess of plant temperature over air temperature averages about 15° in clear, 10° in partly cloudy, and less than 1° in cloudy weather. Curves expressing plant-growth rates and plant temperatures show more decided parallelisms than appear when other temperatures are considered. A formula is evolved for use in determining the effectiveness of air temperature in promoting crop development.

R. DEC. WARD

#### GEOGRAPHICAL NEWS

##### OBITUARY

HUBERT HOWE BANCROFT, the noted historian, died at Walnut Creek, Cal., near San Francisco on March 2 at the age of 86. He is best known for his "History of the Pacific States of North America" (34 vols., 1882-90; preceded by "The Native Races of the Pacific States of North America," 5 vols., 1874-76). The writing of this monumental work was only made possible by a system of card indexing he devised to digest the enormous amount of source material and the training in its use of a corps of research assistants and collaborators. Mr. Bancroft was a Fellow of our Society.

PROFESSOR PAUL VIDAL DE LA BLACHE of the University of Paris, the dean of French geographers, died on April 5 at the age of 73. Professor Vidal de la Blache, who numbered most of the leading geographers of France among his pupils, may fitly be termed the father of the modern French school of geography, a school which, in its combination of scientific accuracy with a sense of proportion, has made all geographers its debtors. Among his leading works may be mentioned: the "Atlas Général Vidal-Blache," first appearing in 1890 and kept up to date in succeeding editions, of the maps of which it has truly been said that many "are marked by great ingenuity of conception, and several are unique to this atlas"; the admirable "Tableau Géographique de la France," published as the introductory volume of Lavis's "Histoire de France" in 1903 and also separately in 1908; and his last work "La France de l'Est: Lorraine-Alsace," published in 1917, which was abstracted *in extenso* in the April *Review* (Vol. 5, 1918, pp. 328-329). A detailed account of his life and achievements, by his son-in-law, Emmanuel de Martonne, and Professor Lucien Gallois, will be found in the "Geographen Kalender" for 1910 (Justus Perthes, Gotha). Another, by Professor Gallois, appears in the latest number of the *Annales de Géographie* (May 15, 1918, pp. 161-173). Professor Vidal de la Blache was awarded the Charles P. Daly Medal of this Society in 1915.

#### CORRESPONDENCE

*To the Editor of "The Geographical Review":*

The undersigned trusts that it will be possible to print the following reply to Professor Mark Jefferson's criticism in the November *Review* (Vol. 4, 1917, pp. 399-400) of his article on "The Monsoon." Professor Jefferson writes "Mr. Wallis bases his objections on alleged facts" and appeals to the evidence in Dr. Herbertson's well-known paper published in 1901 (The Distribution of Rainfall Over the Land) and apparently ignores the illustrative data which are appended to the article under criticism. We have, therefore, an apparent conflict of authorities, so perhaps I may be allowed to specify more